



Phonological Awareness

To understand a spoken language, a child must be able to hear and distinguish the sounds that make up the language. To help develop phonological awareness:

- Help your pre-reader become aware of the smaller sounds that make up words by learning nursery rhymes and making up your own silly, nonsense rhymes together.
- Ask whether two words rhyme: "Do 'cat' and 'dog' rhyme?" "Do 'cat' and 'hat' rhyme?"
- Sing songs with your child every day. Songs naturally break words into syllables and are a fun way to learn about word sounds.
- Play "I Spy" with rhymes. "I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with far (car)." Let your child make up rhymes and have you guess too.
- Put two words together to make a new word: "What word would we have if we put 'cow' and 'boy' together?"
- See if your child can change the beginning sounds of his or her name. "Jimmy, can you change the /j/ in Jimmy to the /t/ sound?" (Don't say the letter name.)
- Say rhymes and sing songs in the language most comfortable for you.

Most children who have an understanding of phonological awareness have an easier time learning to read.